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SHERBORNE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1964

Medical Officer of Health: NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector: J. E. T. BASTABLE.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June, 1965.

To The Chairman and Members,
Sherborne Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1964.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Officers Regulations, 1959.

Allowing for the smallness of numbers under consideration, the vital statistics compare favourably with those for the Country as a whole.

There was no serious incidence of notifiable disease.

I am indebted to Mr. J.E.T. Bastable, your Public Health Inspector, for his co-operation and assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk Miss J.Shirley for her efficient services.

I would also like to acknowledge the happy co-operation and assistance I always obtain from your Clerk, Mr. I. Sartin and the other members of your staff.

Finally, may I thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

SHERBORNE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR

1 9 6 4

A. Area - 41,481 acres
Rateable value: 1st April 1965 - £122,801
Production of a penny rate: 1964/65 - £479 (est)
1965/66 - £496 (est)

Vital Statistics

Population(Registrar General's Estimate) - 6,350

LIVE BIRTHS

	Male	Female		Comparative Rates (a) Sherborne R.D.	Comparative Rates (b) England & Wales
Total	65	53	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 18.6	21.1	18.4
Illegitimate	3	Nil			

STILLBIRTHS

Total (Legitimate)	Nil	1	Rate per 1,000 live & stillbirths = 8.9	8.9	16.3

DEATHS

Total	33	39	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 11.3	10.1	11.3

Deaths in Infants

Under 1 year	1	2	Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = 25.5	25.5	20.0
Under 1 week	1	Nil			

	1964	1963	1962	1961
Deaths from Maternal Causes	Nil	Nil	1	Nil
" " Tuberculosis	2	Nil	Nil	1
" " Cancer of the lungs	3	2	3	3
" " Other Cancer	12	13	6	12
" " Coronary Disease(Angina)	16	12	7	10
" " Other Heart or Vascular diseases	14	28	16	18
" " Influenza	1	Nil	Nil	2
" " Pneumonia	3	5	1	3
" " Motor vehicle accidents	2	Nil	Nil	3
" " All other accidents	1	1	Nil	2
" " Suicide	1	Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Leukaemia & Aleukemia	1	Nil	Nil	Nil

B. Nature of the District

The district is rural in character, its main industry being agriculture. A large number of outworkers carry on glove making in their homes for factories situated outside the district. A large dairy, with a wide supply area, is situated within the district.

The district is becoming increasingly a dormitary area for persons working in Sherborne and Yeovil.

C. Health Services in the District which are not the responsibility of the District Council

The Hospital Service

The Yeatman Hospital (West Dorset Hospital Group of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board) provide the local hospital requirements, both in-patient and out-patient.

Laboratory Services

The Public Health Laboratory Service has again proved co-operative and efficient.

General Medical Practitioner, Ophthalmic and Pharmaceutical Services

These are administered locally by the Dorset Executive Committee.

County Council Services

The personal preventive health services are the responsibility of the County Council.

They comprise, the care of mothers and young children, maternity, school health, prophylactic inoculation, home nursing, mental health, the ambulance service, the care and after care of the tuberculous, blind and handicapped, health education, the domestic help service and the welfare of the aged.

Voluntary Services

Acknowledgment must be made to the excellent voluntary work carried out in the district by the British Red Cross Society.

D. Environmental Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health(Part time) - Noel F. Pearson, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

He also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset area and as Assistant County Medical Officer to the Dorset County Council.

The time available which he has to devote to his duties with your Council is rather less than one half day per week.

Dr. G.B. Hopkins of the Blandford and Wimborne districts acts as his deputy during his absence, on a reciprocal basis.

Public Health Inspector(Part time) - J.E. Fannon, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. (until 9.10.64)

- J.E.T.Bastable, (from 2.11.64)

Certificate of R.S.I. & Sanitary Inspector's Joint Board as Public Health Inspector. Certificate of Royal Society of Health as Inspector of Meat and Foods.

The Public Health Inspector also carries out the duties of Meat Inspector, Refuse Disposal and Maintenance of the Council's sewage schemes, and drainage bye-law administration and petroleum regulations inspector.

Clerical Assistance - One Clerk.

Although the Council accepted, in principle, that additional technical assistance was required in the Public Health Inspector's department, no assistance had been provided by the end of the year.

WATER SUPPLIES

Public Supplies

The Wessex Water Board are the responsible body for the public water supply in the district, this supply giving a fairly good coverage of the area. Apart from a proportion of the water from one small source the whole of the public supplies are chlorinated.

Two samples were taken by the Public Health Department and twenty-seven by the Water Board during the year.

Private Supplies

There are numerous private supplies to communities, farms and individual dwellings and, generally, these receive no purification treatment and can only be regarded as suspect. Only three of these supplies were sampled during the year, insufficient to form any true, general picture of the purity of the water from private sources.

Six samples were taken, four of which were satisfactory and two unsatisfactory.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Bradford Abbas Continued development has put an increasing load on the disposal works serving this area and this is being reflected in the number of unsatisfactory samples of effluent reported by the Rivers Board. Increased maintenance will bring about some improvement at this stage but if future development is envisaged, then enlargement of the works will be necessary.

Yetminster The sewerage scheme is now in progress and it is hoped that the works will be completed towards the end of 1965.

Oborne The unsatisfactory drainage to twelve Council houses is still under review.

Thornford, Alweston & Trent The provision of sewers has been reflected in the number of houses which have been improved in the parishes.

Leigh, Chetnole, Sandford Orcas, Purse Caundle These areas are not sewered. They have generally underlying clay deposits which make it extremely difficult for disposal of effluent by land drainage, consequently the effluent only too often finds its way to the nearest watercourse giving rise to a public health nuisance.

General Sporadic development is continuing in the smaller parishes, mainly by way of infilling. No sewers are available and drainage is to the accepted settlement tank with overflow to land drains. Every endeavour is made to ensure that no nuisance is likely to arise from these installations but they can of course only operate satisfactorily for any long period if properly maintained and in absorbent land.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

House Refuse Collection A twice monthly collection has now been instituted and is working satisfactorily.

After a great deal of investigation into possible sites a new disposal area was obtained at Leigh but it is by no means ideal for the purpose and can only be regarded as a temporary measure until a more suitable site is obtained. In view of the high operating costs of disposal sites a joint site with the Sherborne Urban District is the obvious solution and negotiations are proceeding towards this end.

Salvage Scheme Salvage sales totals were as follows:-

	£.	s.	d.
Paper	6.	19.	6
Metal	15.	11.	3
Rags	1	4.	-
Total - £	23.	14.	9.

Roadside Sanitation Laybys are supplied with litter containers which are emptied weekly during the summer period and fortnightly during the winter.

Cesspool Emptying The Modern Cleansing Company (Yeovil) are under contract for work at the Council's housing sites and this arrangement has worked satisfactorily.

RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION

Continued complaints were received during the year concerning the condition of roadside ditches and streams in the district receiving effluent discharges from farms and dwelling houses. The nuisance from farms can normally be abated by the collection of effluent into sealed manure tanks with frequent emptying of the contents on to suitable farm land. However, that arising from private dwelling houses in unsewered districts is due in the main to heavy clay subsoil making it impossible to obtain satisfactory land drainage. The provision of sealed cesspools does not seem to be the answer to this problem as the high cost of having them emptied would certainly lead to neglect and consequent overflow.

Reports on the Council's sewage disposal plants have been received from the Somerset River Board. They specify both interim and consent standards. It is obvious that appreciable improvement to some of the disposal plants discharging to water-courses will have to be made in order to obtain the consent standard.

OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

This important public health measure came into operation during the year.

Surprisingly, unlike other Acts designed to improve the environmental condition of persons or employees, e.g. the Public Health Acts or The Factory Acts, public health inspectors, as such, were not referred to in the Act, nor was any specific duty placed on the medical officers of health. Nevertheless, under a medical officers general statutory duty to comment in this report on 'any other matters on which he may consider it desirable to report .....' I feel that it is not inappropriate to comment on the working of this Act in your district.

By the end of the year no inspector under the Act had been appointed and few premises in the district only, had sought registration.

SMOKE ABATEMENT

No action was called for or taken during the year.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 (Nil figures not given)

	No. of Premises on Register	Inspections
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	11	-
(ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	22	3
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	5	-
	38	3

No case was referred by H.M. Inspector of Factories.

No. of outworkers - Nil

THE CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

No action was called for or taken during the year.

SWIMMING BATHS

There is one open air bath at a private establishment where members of the public have occasional access by invitation. No treatment of the water is carried out.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS AND CAMPING SITES

Nine licences for individual caravans were issued under the Caravan Sites (Control of Development) Act, 1960, during the year.

VERMINOUS PREMISES

One house was fumigated for fleas using D.D.T. smoke generators.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee, of which the Sherborne Rural District Council is one of the six constituent authorities, continued to carry out the provisions of this Act.

The work of the Committee continued to function smoothly and expeditiously. Four hundred and twenty eight inspections were carried out, treatment being required in three hundred and sixty three cases.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

There are no premises subject to registration under the above-mentioned Act, within the district.

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT

Under the Act, with certain limited exceptions, any person who carries on a business of providing accommodation for other people's animals, even in a private house, must be registered under this Act, by the District Council.

One property in your district is registered under the Act.

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

No premises in the district are licensed under this Act.

SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS)

Thirteen visits were made in respect of sanitation, meals facilities and water supplies.

One school at Bradford Abbas was connected to the public sewer after complaints had been received about the existing unsatisfactory drainage to a cesspool.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 and 1951 - Section 47

No action was required to be taken during the year under these Acts with regard to the compulsory removal of persons in need of care and attention.

RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES ACT

No premises are registered under the Act in your district.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

No public conveniences are provided by your Authority.

HOUSING

Total No. of houses in the district 2,170

It was not possible to carry out a routine inspection of houses under the Housing Acts to ascertain their condition and inspections had to be confined to complaints.

No. of houses inspected during the year	8
No. of inspections made	11
No. of informal notices served	2
No. of informal notices complied with	2
No. of statutory notices served	10
No. of statutory notices complied with	4
No. of houses reported under Section 16 of the Housing Act, 1958	8

Action taken by the Local Authority in respect of such houses -

Demolition Orders made 7

Undertakings accepted for -

Closure	1
Reconditioning	Nil
Other Action	Nil

No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year Nil

Slum Clearance

Very limited action was taken during the year with regard to slum clearance. An appreciable number of houses in the district are recognised as being unfit for habitation but in the absence of new houses being available for re-housing, limited action only was practicable in enforcing closure or demolition of unfit property.

Some of these unfit houses are slowly being rendered fit. It is in respect to such property largely, that discretionary improvement grants are sought.

Overcrowding

No cases of statutory overcrowding were found during the year.

Houses Known to be Let in Lodgings

No houses are known to be let in lodgings.

Improvement Grants (Housing Act, 1949 and Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954)

Fifty applications (compared with thirty three in 1963) were received during the year for discretionary grants under the above-mentioned Act, six applications were received in respect to standard grants compared with twelve during the preceding year.

The Housing Act, 1964 came into operation this year and, together with amending the conditions applying to grants, conferred powers on local authorites to compel where possible improvement of dwellings, in any specified area, which are without the standard amenities.

This is a decided move forward to obtain improvement of dwellings as distinct from general repair and basic fitness. The improvements specified have been given wider application so as to include those dwellings where space is limited. The Act places a duty on every local authority to cause an inspection of their district to be made from time to time with a view to ascertaining whether there is any area in the district which ought to be declared to be an improvement area.

Provision of New Houses and Re-Housing

Forty two new houses were built in the district by private enterprise (compared with eighty three in 1963)

During the year the Council completed four new houses and active planning took place with regard to a new housing estate at Thornford of mixed dwellings.

As the Council house waiting list still reflects a present shortage of houses to let in the district, the provision of these further houses at Thornford is welcomed.

Waiting List

One hundred and twelve applicants were on the Council house waiting list at the end of the year, of which eighty two were resident in the district, compared with eighty three and twenty eight respectively, at the end of 1963.

Fourteen applicants were re-housed by the Council during the year, compared with twenty six during the preceding year.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

1. Milk

Food & Drugs Act, 1955

No. of 'Dealers' subject to registration by the District Council	4
No. of 'dairies' in the district subject to registration	1
No. of 'Distributors' subject to registration	4

Samples

Three hundred and twelve samples of milk were taken and submitted for examination during the year.

Brucellosis

No cases of brucellosis came to notice during the year and no samples of milk were submitted specifically for Brucella abortus infection.

Milk & Dairies(General)Regulations, 1959

Further complaints were received with regard to milk having been supplied from a local dairy in unclean bottles. The Council initiated a prosecution in respect to one complaint. This was successful in the Magistrates Court but on appeal to Quarter Sessions, the appeal was allowed, undoubtedly as a result of the long interval between the time when the complaint was first received and the hearing at Quarter Sessions.

The Council has taken action to allow for such cases to be speeded up in the future, by delegating its powers to a Sub-Committee, to institute proceedings in suitable cases.

Milk & Dairies(General)Regulations, 1959 - Regulation 20.

No formal action was called for or taken during the year.

2. Other Food Premises

The inspection and supervision of food premises is one of the principal duties of a public health department.

This includes the inspection for evidence of disease and fitness for human consumption of all animals killed at the slaughterhouse, the examination as may be necessary of all other foods sold in the district and the supervision of food premises and food vehicles to ensure that food is stored, prepared and sold under clean and hygienic conditions.

A 100% inspection was maintained at the slaughterhouse but it is unfortunate that more time cannot be devoted to the routine food inspection aspects of the other duties.

The department was involved, with the rest of the country, in tracing suspected food in the Aberdeen typhoid outbreak. No cans of suspect meat were found but the incidence of this food poisoning in Aberdeen emphasises the rapidity of such an outbreak and the measures to be taken by the public health department to check its spread.

This opportunity must be taken to pay tribute to the speed and efficiency with which your public health inspector (Mr. Fannon) carried out this investigation which was completed in twenty-four hours.

The number of food premises in the area, by type of business:-

Hotels, restaurants, cafes and boarding houses	20
Canteens - School and workplace	2
Confectioners	6
Meat and Fish	1
Grocers	-
Mixed Stores	20
Boarding Schools and other residential institutions	3
Food Factories	3
Stalls (Mobile shops)	1
Other (Slaughterhouses)	1
Total -	57

Forty eight of these premises were inspected during the year involving eighty two inspections.

No. of above-mentioned subject to registration under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955 in respect of -

Ice Cream	25
Sausages & Prepared Meats	1
Fish and Chips	Nil

No. of samples of ice cream submitted for Methylene Blue Test Nil

Ice Cream(Heat Treatment etc.)Regulations, 1947 - 1952

There are no manufacturers of ice cream in the district.

Byelaws in respect of Handling and Wrapping of Food Etc.

These byelaws are operative within the district.

LIQUID EGG (PASTEURISATION) REGULATIONS, 1963

There are no egg pasteurisation plants in the district and no samples have been submitted.

Slaughterhouses

There is one licensed slaughterhouse in the district. Particulars of inspection of carcases carried out, are in the following table -

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	199	-	-	92	-
Number inspected	199	-	-	92	-
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci					
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	1	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	15	-	-	4	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	7.53	-	-	5.43	-
Tuberculosis only					
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	-
Cysticercosis					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-
Generalized and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT

Total No. of inspections(under all headings)	885
Total No. of informal notices served	15
Total No. of informal notices complied with	16
Total No. of statutory notices served	14
Total No. of statutory notices complied with	8
No. of prosecutions	Nil

E. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Other than Tuberculosis -

Disease	Total Cases Notified
Measles	27
Pneumonia	5
Scarlet Fever	1

Tuberculosis -

New Cases Notified	
Respiratory	Non-Respiratory
1	-

Food Poisoning

No cases of suspected food poisoning were notified during the year.

NOEL F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health.